X-MEN/ETERNALS: MANIFEST DESTINY

70 YEARS OF MARVEL COMICS

ETERNALS

7

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PREVIOUSLY IN ETERNALS





EXISTING FOR UNTOLD CENTURIES, THE ETERNALS – NEAR IMMORTAL BEINGS CREATED BY THE WORLD-JUDGING CELESTIALS – HAVE PROTECTED EARTH THROUGHOUT HISTORY. OFTEN REVERED AS GODS, THESE MIGHTY EGOS HAVE FILLED THE COURTS OF THEIR HOME OLYMPIA WITH TREACHERY. MOST ETERNALS REMAIN LOYAL TO THEIR LEADER, ZURAS, BUT THE AMBITIOUS DRUIG AND EMBITTERED AJAK HAVE THEIR OWN DESIGNS FOR A NEW WORLD ORDER.

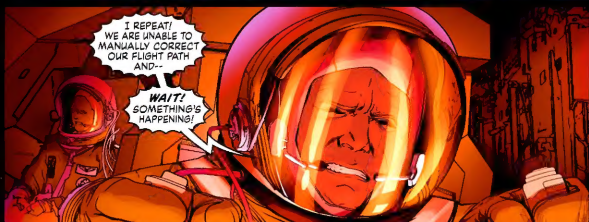
AJAK RECRUITED AND BRAINWASHED THE DISGRACED GILGAMESH, WHO MURDERED MAKKARI, THE ETERNAL'S COMMUNICATOR WITH THE CELESTIALS. THUS BEGAN A CAMPAIGN OF TERROR, AS MAKKARI'S DEATH TRIGGERED A FAIL-SAFE IN THE GIANT DREAMING CELESTIAL STATIONED IN SAN FRANCISCO, COUNTING DOWN TO THE ANNIHILATION OF ALL LIFE ON EARTH! NEXT, GILGAMESH DESTROYED THE REACTIVATION CHAMBERS, THE MACHINES THAT GRANTED THE ETERNALS THEIR PROLONGED LIFE. WITHOUT A SPOKESMAN OR THE MEANS TO HEAL THEMSELVES, THE ETERNALS FACED THE THREAT OF EXTINCTION.



IN THE END, IT WAS MAKKARI'S LOVER, SERSI, WHO SAVED THE PLANET AND HER RACE, USING HER POWERS TO MERGE WITH THE DREAMING CELESTIAL. THIS ACT STOPPED THE MONOLITH'S DEATH SONG AND ULTIMATELY RESTORED MAKKARI, BUT COST THE FREE-SPIRITED ETERNAL HER LIFE.

EVEN WITH SUCH LOSSES, THE ETERNALS MUST FORGE FORWARD — BUT FOR IKARIS AND MAKKARI, MOURNING MUST WAIT UNTIL THEY HAVE THEIR REVENGE...

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MAYDAY, HOUSTON! ALL SYSTEMS DOWN AND WE ARE IN AN UNCONTROLLED REENTRY!

I REPEAT! WE ARE UNABLE TO MANUALLY CORRECT OUR FLIGHT PATH AND--
WAIT! SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!

WE'RE...

...WE'RE SLOWING DOWN!

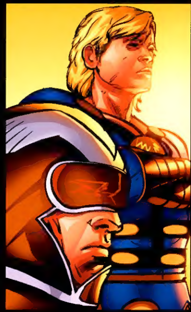

MANIFEST DESTINY
PART ONE
"HAS THE CHAOS SUBSIDED, MAKKARI?"
"FOR THE MOST PART, IKARIS."
CHARLES & DANIEL KNAUF WRITERS
ERIC NGUYEN ARTIST
ANDY TROY COLORIST
TODD KLEIN LETTERER
PAUL ACERIOS PRODUCTION
MIKE HORWITZ ASST. EDITOR
BILL ROSEMANN EDITOR
JOE QUESADA EDITOR IN CHIEF
DAN BUCKLEY PUBLISHER


THE CASUALTIES WERE MITIGATED DUE TO THE FACT THAT ETERNALS WERE UNAFFECTED BY THE ANOMALY.
IF SERSI HADN'T SACRIFICED HERSELF TO RESURRECT ME, WE'D ALL BE LOST.
ANTARCTICA. OLYMPIA. HOME OF THE ETERNALS.


NOW THAT THE REACTIVATION CHAMBER'S BEEN DESTROYED...THIS FEELING. MORTALITY. IT'S STRANGE.
YES, IT IS, MAKKARI.
I CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT IT, IKARIS.


THIS MUST BE HOW HUMANS FEEL. ONE CHANCE, ONE LIFE. IF YOU SCREW IT UP, THAT'S IT.
AND TO LOSE A LOVED ONE FOREVER--
DRUIG. HE DID THIS BY SENDING THAT... MONSTER, GILGAMESH, TO KILL YOU AND DESTROY OUR ACTIVATION CHAMBER.


THIS CONFLICT-- THIS OBSESSION YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD TO DEFEAT DRUIG...
YES?
IT'S ONLY A BRIEF, DISSONANT NOTE IN THE COMPLEX SYMPHONY OF THE UNIVERSE.
IT'S NOTHING. INSIGNIFI-CANT.




I'M NOT GOING TO STOP YOU.
NO ONE COULD.
ONE QUESTION.
YES?
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GET AROUND ZURAS' TREATY WITH DRUIG?


I HAVE A PLAN.

ELSEWHERE.

WHAAA--?

VODKA MARTINI?


HUH?
VODKA MARTINI. YOUR DRINK, SERSI.
I--I THOUGHT I *DIED.*


YOU DID.
SO THIS IS--?
NO.
THEN... IT'S--
NOT THERE, EITHER.


THEN WHERE AM I?


THIS, MY DEAR, IS THE *VESTIBULE.*


SAN FRANCISCO.
"HE'S *WHAT?!*"


HE RENOUNCED HIS OLYMPIAN TIES, ZURAS.
CAN HE...CAN HE *DO* THAT?
YES, HE CAN, THENA.
IF AN ETERNAL CAN BE CAST OUT OF THE FOLD LIKE GILGAMESH WAS SO MANY CENTURIES AGO, THEN IT STANDS TO REASON ONE COULD RENOUNCE HIS TIES TO OUR FACTION AS WELL.
OLYMPIA'S OBSERVATION ROOM.


"CAN'T YOU ALL SEE WHAT HE'S DOING?"


WITHOUT HIS TIES TO US HE CAN IGNORE YOUR TRUCE WITH DRUIG. YOU HAVE--
--WHAT'S THAT PHRASE THE HUMANS USE THESE DAYS, VIRANKO?
"PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY." YES, PHASTOS!

"THERE'S ONE HUGE PROBLEM WITH THAT.

"HE'S ON HIS OWN."
WHERE ARE YOU...?
"THENA'S RIGHT. IF HE DOES DECIDE TO CLASH WITH DRUIG AND HIS PEOPLE, WE CANNOT PROVIDE AID."

DAMN, THAT'S RIGHT. AND WITH THE ACTIVATION CHAMBER DESTROYED, HE HAS NO MEANS OF RESURRECTION.

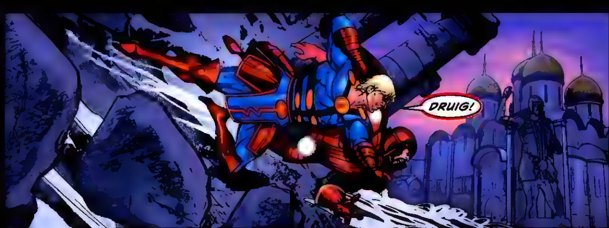
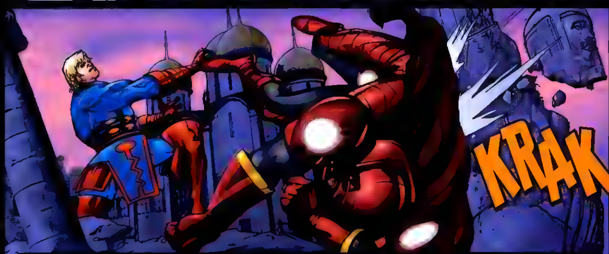
NO, PHASTOS, THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN IKARIS IS LETTING ON.
I CAN'T BE SURE, BUT...

GOT YOU.
"THERE'S SOMETHING VERY DIFFERENT ABOUT IKARIS. SOMETHING COLD... DETER-MINED...

DRUIG.

"...AND VERY DANGEROUS."

VRODZHEIKA.
DRUIG'S PALACE.
BEFORE WE COULD GET TO GILGAMESH, I KNOW AJAK MANIPULATED HIM.
MM-HMM.
BUT WHAT I DON'T KNOW IS *WHY.*
HMM.
OR, MORE IMPORTANTLY, LEGBA, HOW HE LOCATED GILGAMESH BEFORE *I* DID.
DRUIG? SHOULDN'T YOU DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE CITIZENS?
THEIR CRIES ARE BOTHERING ME.
THEN GET EARPLUGS. I REALLY DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO THESE MONKEYS, AS LONG AS THEY KNOW--
WHAT IS *THAT?*
IKARIS...?
BKOOM


DRUIG!

KRAK

YOU ARE IN... VIOLATION OF--

SHUDDUP.


BRAK A-KOOM


YAAAHH!
KA-DOOM


SHOULD HAVE KNOWN DRUIG WOULDN'T LET THIS JUST BE HIM AND ME.


RAHH!







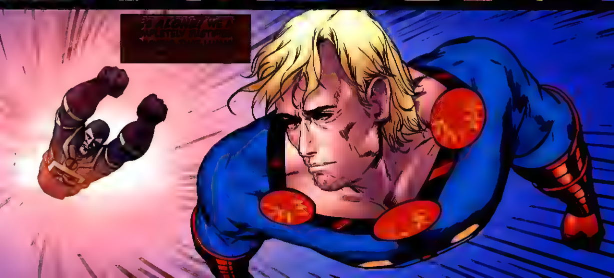
...BUT TRAGICALLY ***STUPID.***


BA-BOOM


ERAMIS, STAY WITH HIM AND TAKE POINT.
THE REST OF YOU GATHER YOUR STRENGTH AND PREPARE TO FOLLOW.


WOULD IT BE *WISE* TO GIVE CHASE? IT SEEMS A LITTLE STRANGE THAT--


ARE YOU *MAD?!*
WE CANNOT ALLOW THAT FOOL TO TRESPASS ON *OUR* LAND AND ACCOST US WITH-OUT REPRISAL!
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE OLYMPIANS?
DID YOU NOT HEAR?




OLYMPIA'S ACTIVATION CHAMBER.
DAMN. GILGAMESH DID A HELL OF A NUMBER ON THIS.
DISCOVER ANYTHING SO FAR?
WELL...

...IT'S INTERESTING. THE ORGANICS MESHED WITH THE TECHNOLOGICAL.
IT'S MORE ADVANCED THAN EVEN *I* COULD IMAGINE.

IS THAT A GOOD THING, PHASTOS?

NO, ZURAS.

IT MEANS THAT UNTIL I CAN FIGURE OUT HOW THIS THING IS POWERED, WHEN WE DIE, WE'RE **NOT** COMING BACK.

YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS, IKARIS?
YOU ALWAYS CONCENTRATE ON THE UNOBTAINABLE!
LIKE NOW-- YOU THINK YOU CAN GET AWAY!
AND YOU HAVE TWO PROBLEMS, ERAMIS.
ONE: TARGET FIXATION. YOU FOCUS TOO MUCH ON ONE THING.
AND TWO...
KROOM


...YOU ALWAYS WERE A SUB-PAR FLYER!

COCKY JERK...

OLYMPIA. MAKKARI'S QUARTERS.

DREAMING CELESTIAL...

...WE HAVE TO TALK.

YES.

WE NEED TO DISCUSS THE HORDE.

WHERE IS SERSI?
I DO NOT KNOW.
I FIND THAT IMPOSSIBLE...
FIND IT HOWEVER YOU WISH. THERE ARE SOME THINGS BEYOND EVEN *MY* COMPREHENSION. THINGS ONLY BEINGS OF A HIGHER POWER KNOW.
WHERE A LIFE FORCE GOES AFTER DEATH, EVEN AN ETERNAL LIFE FORCE, I DO NOT KNOW.
NOW PAY ATTENTION. THIS IS THE PRELIMINARY HORDE--
"WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

I WILL REPEAT. THIS IS THE PRELIMINARY--

NO, I MEAN YOUR SPEECH. YOU SOUND MORE...NORMAL. LIKE US. WHY?

I DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU ARE INFERRING.

WE MUST STOP DISCUSSING TRIVIAL MATTERS AND CONTINUE--

NO! I'M TIRED OF THIS!

WHY ARE YOU HELPING US?!

WHY NOT JUST TAKE OFF? YOU COULD DO THAT, WHY NOT?

WHY LEAVE THIS IMPOSSIBLE FIGHT TO US?

WHY CHOOSE US?

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE ME?

WHY CHOOSE SERSI?

WHY DID SHE HAVE TO DIE...?

HIS NAME IS CORY FOSS. HE GOES BY DJ PHOSPHOROUS. YOU CAN FIND HIM IN MONTREAL.

WAIT...

HE IS ANOTHER SLEEPING ETERNAL. GO, NOW.

I'M SORRY. I WAS JUST--

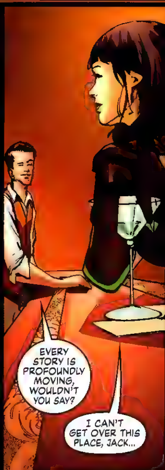
GO!

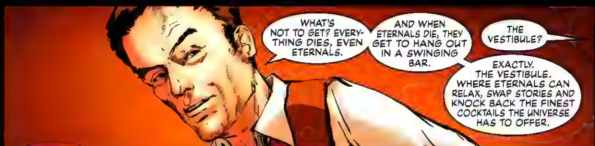





AND THERE WE STOOD, AT THE END OF DAYS, WATCHING THEM ENVELOP OUR PLANET--A GREAT, BLACK, DEVOURING CLOUD--
THE VESTIBULE.


THAT WAS *BEAUTIFUL.* HERE, ON THE HOUSE.
THANK YOU.
BETTER WET YOUR WHISTLE BEFORE YOU HEAD OFF TO THE LACUNA.


EVERY STORY IS PROFOUNDLY MOVING, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
I CAN'T GET OVER THIS PLACE, JACK...


WHAT'S NOT TO GET? EVERY-THING DIES, EVEN ETERNALS.
AND WHEN ETERNALS DIE, THEY GET TO HANG OUT IN A SWINGING BAR.
THE VESTIBULE?
EXACTLY. THE VESTIBULE. WHERE ETERNALS CAN RELAX, SWAP STORIES AND KNOCK BACK THE FINEST COCKTAILS THE UNIVERSE HAS TO OFFER.


YOU AREN'T *KIDDING* ABOUT THOSE DRINKS.
NO, I AM NOT, PRETTY LADY.


THERE ARE ONLY TWO ROADS OUT OF HERE. ONE: BACK TO YOUR RESPEC-TIVE PLANET THROUGH AN *ACTIVATION CHAMBER...*
TWO: TO THE LACUNA.
SO, WHAT'S THAT? HEAVEN?


I CAN'T GIVE EVERYTHING AWAY, NOW CAN I?

DREAM SPACE.

IT'S CALLED ***ANGER.*** IT'S AN EMOTION.

IMPOSSIBLE. I AM DEVOID OF EMOTION, WATCHER.

ARE YOU PERFORMING AN ASSESSMENT?

YES.

CROSS-REFERENCE YOUR REACTION WITH ANY STORED EMOTIONAL DATA.

CHECKING...

YOU ARE CORRECT. MY REACTIONS APPEAR TO BE INCREASINGLY INFLUENCED BY WHAT APPEARS TO BE EMOTION.

IN FACT, MOST OF MY REACTIONS APPEAR TO BE COM-PROMISED.

THIS IS HOW IT STARTS. YOU BEGIN TO DISCOVER NEW FEELINGS, LIKE ANGER AND CONCERN.

MY MANDATE DICTATES THAT I SHUT MYSELF DOWN AND COM-PRESS MY MASS INTO A BLACK HOLE.

AND...?

NO. THAT WOULD COMPROMISE MY ABILITY TO SEND THE FULCRUM VITAL INFORMATION CONCERNING EARTH.

YES. YOU WILL NOT DESTROY YOURSELF FOR THE GOOD OF THE MISSION...

SAN FRANCISCO.
ERAMIS?
HE'S SLOWING DOWN.
LOOKS LIKE HE'S TRYING TO MAKE IT TO ALCATRAZ--
RRUHHH!
WHAT IS IT?
SOMETHING HAPPENED TO ERAMIS.
NO MATTER. THE REST OF US ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO LEVEL A CONTINENT.
THIS SHOULD BE OVER BEFORE IT--
VZAP!
BEFORE IT WHAT, DRUIG...


...GETS COMPLICATED?
INCONCEIVABLE! IS THIS POSSIBLE? HAVE THE ASTONISHING X-MEN ACTUALLY JOINED FORCES WITH THE ROGUE ETERNAL IKARIS? FIND OUT IN NEXT MONTH'S POWER-PACKED ISSUE... BIRDS OF A FEATHER!

IS SUE STORM THE NEW BLACK PANTHER?



BLACK PANTHER #1

REGGIE HUDLIN · KEN LASHLEY

FEBRUARY 2009

MARVEL
YOUR UNIVERSE